

SPORTS

THE BATTALION

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Soccer team begins run in Big 12 Tournament

By Troy Miller
THE BATTALION

The No. 3 Texas A&M women's soccer team (15-3-1, 9-0-1) is looking to defend its 2001 Tournament title and its 2002 regular season championship this week in San Antonio at the Big 12 Championship Tournament. The last time the Aggies won a regular season title was in 1997, when they went on to win their first-ever tournament crown.

The 2002 season has been full of ups and downs. The Aggies have a 14-game unbeaten streak, which is a team record for consecutive games without a loss. The streak started after dropping three matches in a row, which is the team record for most consecutive losses.

With the Aggies 2-1 win against No. 5 Texas Friday, giving them the regular season title, the Aggies secured the first end of the Big 12 Championship double-dip. Now that the first goal has been met, the Aggies are moving on to the next step in their quest.

"We're reassessing our goals for the rest of the way," said head coach G. Guerrieri. "We consider (the Big 12 Tournament) to be a season unto itself." The Aggies enter the tournament as

the number one seed by virtue of their first place finish in the regular season. They begin by facing off against the eighth-seeded Oklahoma State Cowgirls who are making their program's first Big 12 Tournament appearance.

The Cowgirls are coming off a 3-2 win against archrival Oklahoma. OSU sophomore Jeni Jackson scored a hat trick, or three goals, in the last six minutes to overcome a 2-0 deficit and give the Cowgirls their first Big 12 Tournament birth.

"(OSU) is going to be a hungry team," said Big 12 Offensive Player of the Week Emma Smith. "It's going to be a good game for us to go in and play first. It'll be a good hard game."

Smith has picked up her game as she has scored six goals in the last six games and is on a current six-game point streak. Coupled with sophomore Linsey Woodard, whose 13 goals lead the Big 12, the Aggie offense is running on all cylinders.

"(Our midfielders) have been unbelievable at getting behind people and sending in crosses," Smith said.

Freshman Kati Jo Spisak, the Big 12 Newcomer of the Week and First-Team All-Big 12 selection, has continued to

improve her aggressiveness in the net. Spisak made six saves against Texas, including a save on a penalty shot.

The rest of the defense, anchored by First-Team All-Big 12 selection Jessica Martin, has forced opponents away from their strategies.

"All over the field everybody, throughout the season, has stepped up," said senior midfielder Heather Ragsdale. "As a team we have started to play a lot better overall."

The competition in the Big 12 Tournament should be fierce. Texas, the No. 2 seed, did not lose a game until it faced the Aggies. No. 3 Nebraska won the Big 12 Tournament in 1996, 1998, 1999, and 2000 and No. 4 Missouri has netted 13.9 percent of its shots.

"We should be nothing but confident," Guerrieri said. "The players should have experienced the satisfaction of what hard work brings, and they've worked hard."

The Aggies begin play at 11 a.m. on Thursday against Oklahoma State at Blossom Field in San Antonio. The winner of that game will take on the winner of Missouri vs. Colorado in Friday's semifinal.



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A&M sophomore Linsey Woodard battles for the ball against Texas last week.

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CLEARING THE AIR ABOUT THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF ABORTION

Martha Shuping, M.D.

Supporting citations are posted at www.afterabortion.org

Why do women have abortions?

At least 70 percent of women having abortions say they believe it is immoral. But they choose against their conscience because of pressure from others and their circumstances.

Most women choose abortion out of fear—fear of not being able to raise a child, fear of losing their partner if they do not have an abortion, fear of losing control over their lives, etc. Some polls show that more than 80 percent say they would have completed their pregnancies under better circumstances or with more support from the people they love.

It is precisely because so many women who abort are acting against their consciences and maternal instincts that the psychological impact of abortion can be so profound.

Didn't former U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop conclude that there are no psychological consequences from abortion?

Actually, no. What Dr. Koop reported to President Reagan was that all the studies on abortion complications were seriously flawed. As a result, the data was simply inadequate to determine the extent and degree of the psychological impact of abortion. He made a recommendation for a government-funded study to answer this question. Unfortunately, this study was never done.

Some extremists have twisted Dr. Koop's letter to the President to mean, "Koop didn't find anything, so nothing exists." Dr. Koop has publicly refuted this misrepresentation.

resentation of his views. He has stated that he is personally convinced, even by the existing evidence, that many women do suffer serious post-abortion psychological problems. It is the degree of this problem that has not been measured.

Still, don't most experts agree that there is no significant psychological impact from abortion?

While many abortion proponents will discount the psychological costs of abortion, others are more candid. For example, Dr. Julius Fogel has personally performed more than 20,000 abortions. He is unique in that he is both a psychiatrist and an obstetrician, and he insists that "every woman, whatever her background or sexuality, has a trauma at destroying a pregnancy....[I]t is not as harmless and casual an event as many in the pro-abortion crowd insist."

In fact, there are more than 375 studies dealing with the psychological impact of abortion on women. All show that at least a minority of women, typically between 10 and 20 percent, have one or more negative reactions shortly after an abortion. Studies looking at long-term reactions indicate that the longer after an abortion one looks, the more negative reactions will be reported.

So what are the psychological aftereffects of abortion?

Every woman is different. They each have different responses in different time frames. Some women repress or are unaware of any aftereffects for many years.

Commonly reported reactions include: feelings of guilt, shame, anxiety, helplessness, grief and/or remorse; uncontrollable crying; feelings of anger, bitterness, and

resentment; feelings of distrust and betrayal; lowered self-esteem; avoidance of babies, small children, or anything to do with pregnancy; fear of future pregnancies or, alternatively, a desire to have a "replacement" baby; flashbacks to the abortion experience; nightmares or sleeping disorders; depression; sexual dysfunction; eating disorders; substance abuse; self-destructive behavior; broken or abusive relationships; problems bonding with other children; suicidal thoughts or tendencies; and other problems.

Some of the most recently released studies have found that women who have abortions are more likely to become depressed, to abuse drugs or alcohol, or to need treatment for mental disorders. Studies have also shown that compared to women who give birth, women who abort are six times more likely to commit suicide within the next year.

A trained post-abortion counselor can be of tremendous help in resolving these problems.

You said that some of these reactions might be delayed or repressed. Are there times or circumstances when negative reactions are more likely to occur?

Delayed reactions are often triggered by subsequent life events such as the birth of a child, the death of a loved one, the end of a relationship, a religious conversion, or even physical changes like menopause.

Many women have "anniversary reactions," such as anxiety attacks, depression, suicidal impulses, or abdominal cramping around the anniversary date or month of the abortion or around the time when their babies would have been due.

Dr. Martha Shuping, M.D., is a psychiatrist with more than ten years of experience in helping women with post-abortion issues.

MY NAME IS AMANDA

My name is Amanda and I am 18 years old. When I told my boyfriend [I was pregnant] he blamed me for getting pregnant and insisted that I have the abortion.

My mom told me that I either had to have an abortion or get out of her house. No one would support me, not my boyfriend and not my family. I felt alone and trapped. I went through with the abortion but I never wanted to do it.

The amount of guilt I feel is tremendous. Everything reminds me of what I did. I am trying very hard to get through this.

The only advice that was ever offered by my boyfriend and my mom was to just not think about it.

They said that it was the right thing and that I did what I had to do. I think that is a joke.

I just can't get over it.



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